

LITERACY LIGHTS



"To learn to read is to light a fire!" VICTOR HUGO

255 Clifton Boulevard, Suite 314, Westminster, Maryland 21157 • 410-857-0766 • www.literacyccmd.org

February, 2017

From the Director's Desk

By Sam Greenholtz, Director of the Literacy Council of Carroll County, MD

Happy New Year to everyone! 2017 looks like it may be a good one for the Literacy Council. We have gotten off to a very good start with a grant from the Nora Roberts Foundation. We should receive the funding late in the 1st Quarter. We have submitted a number of other grant requests and are hoping to add some more going forward. Sandy Sidlovsky is our Grant Writer and welcomes any suggestions for new grant applications.

Of special interest, we have gone to the new Fiscal Year of January 1 to December 31. This allows us to match up with many of the programs that we are interfacing with throughout the year. This allows us to plan our financial picture more accurately. Shaun Blakeslee, our Treasurer, along with Barbara Croft and Donna Crafton have done an excellent job converting to this new policy.

I urge everyone to support us as we run our fundraisers and public recognition programs. Upcoming events include Read Across America at the Town Mall on February 25th, the Spelling Bee on April 27th and a reminder to save the date for the 2nd Annual LCCC Golf Tournament on September 22nd. The Spelling Bee and Golf Tournament are our two major fundraisers scheduled for this year. We depend heavily upon these two events to fund our programs and need your support. Please come out and enjoy either one. You can purchase tickets for the Spelling Bee for \$25 per person which includes dinner and wine, in addition to other entertainment. Both Sheriff DeWees and Circuit Court Judge Fred Hecker will be in attendance. The Sheriff's stories were a big hit last year, and Judge Hecker will deliver the words with his usual wit.

If you prefer to golf, we are accepting early reservations at the office. \$100 per golfer, \$400 per team and \$450 per team and a hole sponsorship. Hole sponsorship is \$100. Payment is not due until September.

I would be remorse if I did not thank Heidi White for her outstanding work and commitment to her job as Student/Tutor Coordinator and to all the tutors who donate their time and efforts to our clients. Thanks to everyone for all you do, and I know I have missed people so you are included in this huge **THANK YOU!**

Calling All Tutors and Former Tutors Missing Materials

If you have borrowed materials from the Literacy Council and are not using them, please return them to the office. We are in the process of rebuilding our resources and want to know what we need to order. The materials can be dropped off at any library and will be sent to us through the inner office mail or can be dropped off at our office 9:30 to 12:30, Monday through Friday.

Thank You

Save the Date

Saturday, February 25 *Read Across America*
Thursday, April 27 *Annual Spelling Bee*

Welcome Sandy Sidlovsky



Sandy Sidlovsky began working as a volunteer Grant Writer in October 2016. Sandy, an avid reader, recently retired from the Social Security Administration and was searching for a way to give other adults the opportunity to improve their lives. Grant writing seemed like a natural fit as Sandy understands that grants help supply the educational materials. She recently accepted a position with the Kahlert Foundation but will continue to work with us.

Sandy and her husband love to travel – especially to visit their granddaughters in Mississippi.

Tutor Training Provided to Prepare Students for Citizenship Test

The Literacy Council offers a variety of programs to meet the needs of citizens of Carroll County. One of these programs is to assist our clients in preparing for the Citizenship Test. In recent months several students have taken and passed the Citizen Test to become American citizens.

On January 18 we held a roundtable discussion at the Literacy Council office so that Judy Goodyear and Marianne Cholakian could share ideas, techniques, and materials that they used to help their students reach this important milestone.

Those tutors in attendance got important tips to use with their students on completion of the paperwork, practice questioning for putting students at ease, and websites for practice answers.

Thanks to Judy and Marianne for helping prepare our tutors so that they can prepare our students for success.

Heidi White

Student/Tutor Coordinator

(Please see the personal stories of Judy and Marianne's students in previous issues of the Newsletter.)

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Read Across America

Saturday, February 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Town Mall, Westminster

The Literacy Council will once again be participating in the "Read Across America" celebration at Town Mall in Westminster on Saturday, February 25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This year we will be making Cat in the Hat Whiskers with the kids and handing out word search puzzles and pencils.

We are looking for volunteers to cover a two-hour shift, either 10 a.m. to noon or noon to 2 p.m. If you would like to help at this fun event, please call the office at 410-857-0766 or email us at lcouncil@carr.org with the shift you can cover.

18th Annual Spelling Bee

Thursday, April 27

St. John's Portico, 43 Monroe Street, Westminster

Plans are underway for the 18th Annual Spelling Bee which will be held on Thursday, April 27 at St. John's Portico.

This year we will have three themed baskets to raffle off at the event. We are looking for donations to fill the three baskets – Sports, Ladies Nite Out and Movie/Foodie baskets. Please consider donating a gift card or an item so we can stuff these baskets full.

Sponsorship Needed

We are in need of one or two projectors and a laptop computer for our Tutor Training sessions and use when we travel to organizations to promote our mission. Please consider sponsoring one of these items or donating toward the purchase.

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Barbara and the Men She Has Known

Over the eight years Barbara Weir has been tutoring, she has split her time between two young men. Both have made progress, the first reaching his goals and leaving tutoring and the second currently working towards completing his goals.

Her first student came to the Literacy Council seeking to improve his reading. For 2 plus years they worked together and Barbara saw real visible reading improvement. He had to stop tutoring because of new pressures at work but returned about two years later to develop his computer skills. Barbara observed, "It is worthwhile to see individuals try to improve their reading or learn computer skills as adults and to keep at it even when it is hard or when their family and work commitments make it hard for them to make the time."

Her second student also came to the Literacy Council wanting to improve his reading. Having left Carroll County Schools with a certificate of completion, he knew that his literacy skills were not at the level he wanted. Also, he wanted to find a job he enjoyed and feel financially secure. Barbara and her student began in one of the adult learning series that are part of the curriculum at the Literacy Council, but when Barbara felt he was not recognizing his own progress she asked him "What do you want to read?" His reply was history and biographies. With the help of Reagan, Obama, Harriet Tubman to name just a few, he has become really engaged in reading. He does all assigned homework and looks for additional historical material to share with her. He voted this year in both the primary and general elections with an understanding of the issues and an eagerness to discuss the direction of our nation's future. He is currently planning to try for his CDL license in 2018 which will help him achieve his specific employment goals.

When asked about her tutoring experience, Barbara states "When I first started tutoring I wasn't sure what to expect. I had never taught before and was a little uncertain if I could be effective at it. The resources available were great and I found everyone at the Council to be helpful with issues and questions that arose or when I was uncertain on how to proceed in a given situation. But what a great experience it has been. I am so happy I decided to tutor."

